

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS ABOUT THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL

(“THE SCHOOL HANDBOOK”)



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Introduction

The Education (School and Placing Information)(Scotland) Regulations 1982 (the 1982 Regulations) require education authorities to provide certain information each year to parents/carers (usually known as "the school handbook") about the school which their child attends. This information may be available in a range of formats and could be included as part of the school's annual report.

The Regulations cover a range of information such as transport facilities, school meal provision, post-school destinations, additional support for learning, discipline and school rules, enforcement of attendance, specialist provision, attainment in National Qualifications and placing requests.

Why are we consulting now?

The changes currently taking place in 3-18 education in Scotland through Curriculum for Excellence - including significant changes to the curriculum itself; to assessment and National Qualifications; and to supporting learners and promoting the health and wellbeing of all learners - suggest the current requirements for the school handbook need to be refreshed and updated to ensure it is more relevant and helpful for parents, and more consistent with the values, purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence.

We are also currently consulting on the future of Scottish Government statistical collections across the education and lifelong learning portfolio. A survey of users of education statistics took place during September and Scottish Government officials are currently using the evidence gathered to inform their advice to Ministers. Given the links between the evidence currently presented in the handbook and the statistical collections a consultation on the future of the handbook is therefore timely.

Consultation methods

In addition to the questionnaire we will be running a series of consultation events across Scotland to ensure that we engage as widely as possible with parents and Parent Councils on this important issue. We will also be seeking the views of other key stakeholders including teachers, Headteachers, local authorities and others who have a particular interest in this area.

How to respond

We would welcome your views on the future requirements for providing the right kinds of information for parents and carers about their child's school. The consultation will open in mid November and will end on 14 March 2011.

The consultation questionnaire can be accessed on <https://web.questback.com/scottishgovernment/schoolhandbookconsultation/>

Should you or someone you know require the questionnaire in alternative format/language, please email schoolshandbook@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.

Handling your response

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete the Respondent Information Form which forms part of the consultation questionnaire as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

What happens next

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other evidence available from consultation events. We would aim to report on the process by summer 2011 and recommend any appropriate changes to the 1982 Regulations in autumn 2011.



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